

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

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SAJ-01 SS-15 NSC-05 DODE-00 FEA-01 EB-07 COME-00

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R 201753Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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UNCLAS ANKARA 0541

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR TU GR CY

SUBJ: AEGEAN ISSUES

REF: ANKARA 339 AND 361

SUMMARY: AEGEAN ISSUES CONTINUE TO BE SUBJECT
OF COMMENT BY TURKISH LEADERS AND MEDIA, EVOKING ADDITIONAL
STATEMENTS FROM PRIMIN IRMAK, FONMIN ESENBEL, AND
DEFMIN SANCAR IN LAST FEW DAYS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIMIN IRMAK, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION DURING JAN 18
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET HEARINGS, ANNOUNCED THAT TURKEY
WOULD BEGIN OIL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES IN THE AEGEAN BY THE
BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY AND IF THERE WERE ANY GREEK "AGGRESSION"
DURING THESE EXPLORATIONS, GOT WOULD "DO WHAT ANY TURKISH
GOVERNMENT WOULD DO". PREVIOUS DAY, DURING VISIT TO KONYA,
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HE REPORTEDLY TOLD THE CITY'S MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HE WOULD "LEAVE

THE AEGEAN SEA TO NO ONE", AND HE REPEATED EARLIER THEME THAT "HALF OF THE AEGEAN IS OURS".

2. FONMIN ESENBEL, IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN JAN 19 CUMHURIYET, STATED THAT A "DYNAMIC" POLICY IN THE AEGEAN WAS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD TURKEY'S RIGHTS. HE SAID "TURKEY IS NOT THE TURKEY OF 1923 AFTER THE LAUSANNE TREATY...THE POLICY TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF A GROWING TURKEY HAS TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF 50 YEARS AGO." OTHER NOTE-WORTHY POINTS WERE:

A. ON PROSPECT OF CYPRUS-AEGEAN "PACKAGE DEAL":
"...IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THESE TWO IMPORTANT TOPICS... IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO US TO SEEK A SOLUTION BALANCING A GAIN ON ONE AND A SACRIFICE ON THE OTHER, BY TACKLING THESE TWO ISSUES IN A PACKAGE DEAL..."

B. ON TIMING OF EXPLORATIONS IN AEGEAN: "WHAT IS IMPORTANT FROM OUR ANGLE IS CHOOSING THE MOST APPROPRIATE TIME. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS TIME WILL BE VERY SOON. AT THE MOMENT THE MOST IMPORTANT TOPIC FOR US IS THE TRANSFER TO TURKEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OF OUR KINSMEN WHO HAVE SUFFERED SO MUCH IN CYPRUS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RUN THIS WITHOUT HAMPERING IT FOR ANY REASON."

C. U.S. ROLE: ESENBEL DENIED THAT PRESSURE FROM U.S. WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR POSTPONEMENT OF PROSPECTING.

3. GREEK DEFMINISTER AVEROFF'S COMMENTS OF TWO WEEKS AGO CONTINUE TO PROVOKE HIGH-LEVEL COMMENT (REFTELS). DEFMIN SANCAR, IN STATEMENT IN THS WEEK'S "YANKI" MAGAZINE, EXPRESSED OPINION THAT AVEROFF MUST HAVE LOST "CERTAIN MEMORIES" SINCE THE "BALANCE OF POWER IN THE AEGEAN IS CLEARLY IN FAVOR OF TURKEY". HOWEVER, IN SAME MAGAZINE ESENBEL SAID: "THERE ARE SIGNS THAT AVEROFF'S WORDS ARE NOT AS THREATENING AS THEY WERE REPORTED."

4. PRESS ALSO IS SHOWING CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN AEGEAN. MASS CIRCULATION HURRIYET (WHICH HAS TRADITION OF AGITATING ON ANTI-GREEK THEMES) ON JAN 20 USED BANNER HEADLINE: UNCLASSIFIED

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"GREEKS AGAIN MAKING BUILD-UP". ARTICLE, WHICH MENTIONS NO SOURCES, CLAIMED THAT GREEK MILITARY UNITS ARE ON ALERT IN WESTERN THRACE AND GREEK FLEET HAS SAILED INTO THE AEGEAN. (HURRIYET BUREAU HERE ADMITTED TO USIS THAT STORY ORIGINATED IN ATHENS AND WAS BASED ON WIDESPREAD RUMOR CIRCULATING THERE.) EDITORIALS ON AEGEAN AND GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, ALL TAKING STRONGLY NATIONALISTIC LINE, HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ON INCREASE IN SEVERAL OTHER MAJOR DAILIES.

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